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THE HIDDEN WEAPON

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"..... This undertaking led to a few of those rare situations in which the intelligence industry -- usually as dull and prosaic as double-entry bookkeeping -- actually began to resemble the spy thrillers of popular fiction. Allied agents bought and sold strategic materials in the black market, and followed the progress of individual packets through various intermediaries to the ships intended to carry them."

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THE HIDDEN WEAPON  
The Story of Economic Warfare

David L. Gordon & Royden Dangerfield

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"All efforts at eliminating smuggling activities depended basically upon good intelligence. The United States used FBI agents in Latin America and OSS operatives in the Iberian Peninsula. Reports of the Office of Naval Intelligence, The Army's G-2, and consular officials were brought together in Washington and pored over for possible leads. Among the most valuable data was that culled from censorship intercepts. It became possible eventually to prepare dossiers on particular vessels and crew members or suspected Axis agents or sympathizers, or professional smugglers who could be bribed.

These intelligence activities were, of course, kept highly secret -- so much so that in the early days of the war no one of the various Allied investigation agencies knew much about what the others were doing. In one instance a suspected smuggler, upon whom several intelligence outfits had had their eye, was met at the dock upon his arrival from Europe by a half dozen agents of as many competing British and American intelligence organizations. The traditional jealousies and suspicions were eventually broken down, however, as the magnitude of the problem became clear, and following explicit instructions from Washington and London ordering complete co-operation. Contraband committees representing British and American agencies were set up in all the principal Latin American ports, as well as in London and Washington to sift and exchange the information they received. The mass of information that resulted from their co-ordinated activities helped to plug many of the leaks in the paper blockade and to cut down substantially the smuggling of goods of small volume and very high value that it had seemed so hopeless to attack. The evidence provided by the individual smugglers aided immensely in overcoming

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the normal inertia of the Latin American police in such matters, and in obtaining a number of highly satisfying convictions. Some other suspicious characters, against whom it had not been possible to get sufficient evidence to obtain convictions, were effectively discouraged from undertaking unnecessary journeys -- which made it considerably harder to transport the contraband."